That Roberto8 He's divorced Ingrid again!

He's not violent about it this time. I haven't seen him beat here or even chase her away. But it is clear that poor Ingrid is again without a husband. This time his behavior is, in a way, worse than the beatings he did administered when he first cast her loose. Now he seems to be just indifferent.

I have been watching them for eight days. I had been away for ten days, and as soon as I returned home I knew what that rascal had done. When a goose walks alone in the early spring she has no mate. Poor Ingrid was very much alone. The first thing I noticed when I got home, in fact, was that she alone was in the pasture. Roberto, Das and the wild geesewere near the back door of the house waiting to be fed. Not once since then has Ingrid come for her goodies. She spends most of her time grazing.

Under the consri circumstances, that is a good thing. Little nourishment as there is in the grass in early March in out latitude, at least she is eating. Perhaps there is this difference between the male and female geese, the female will eat when her emotional balance has been shattered. My experience with the psychiatric prbl problems of geese, ahppily, has been limited. But I shall never forget the hunger strike on which "Big Papa" went when I spearated him from one of his wives. I thought he would die of str starvation, unless he first committed

suicide by konking his heart out, before he took a few desultory nibbles at the grass.

Ingrid is eating heartily. In fact, I haven't seen her in the past eight days when she wasn't grazing. Often she alone was feeding, also unusual among geese, all of whom usually do the same thing at the same time. She has been dining so steadily that I have begun to wonder about it. Is she trying to stuff herself to death? Is she becoming a compulsive eater? Is she untroubled by her divorce - in fact, has she become the first goose in my experience to divorce her gander?

Although I have never seen or even heard of this, I suppose it is possible. That would explain Roberto's unnatural tolerance of her, if it can be assumed he would be indifferent at being divorced. I would expect, had she been the one to leave him, that he would be carrying on in the traditional menner of ganders, making a big fuss over her, honking his love and admiration over her back with his beautiful ong neck extended. Also, I haven't seen hi cahse her, which is very imprtant in a goose society during mating season. She has often been close to both Roberto and Das, without complaint from that Roman of the once-roving eye.

Despite its poetic possibilities, I cannot believe Ingrid has sundered their reunion. I dont really mind having all her eggs infertile. It would please me if she had turned her fluff on him, for that would be both fair and just as

I see it. She had done nothing to earn his first abandonment. She had never justified the mean, hard beatings he had then given her. It would tickle me is if I could believe that she consorted with him for almost a year, accepting his protection and favors, such as the tidbits he took from my hand and presented her, only to deny him the conjugal fluff down on the first possible occasion.

Yet I just cannot believe this is what happened. It is too unnatural. Only for one brief period in the entire year does nature empower them to reproduce. The drive is overpowering. Nature impels Ingrid to reproduce herself. She would not fail to do so if she could. She will still lay her eggs, and she will set on them, for longer than the four necessary weeks. Nature will compel her to do this, and she will follow nature's bidding. But Nature also directs her to her mate.

It is all very confusing, and I really dont know what happened. I know only that it has happened, but unless marriage and divorce are going to become an annual event with them, it hasn't happened the way it should have happened.

Ingrid should not be spending all her time eating. Geese eat, drink, rest and eliminate and then repeat the cycle, endlessly. I haven't seen Ingrid settle down once in the past eight days. She just eats, as though each bill ful might be her last. Roberto should not be willing for her to be near him or Das, but he makes no protest. Ingrid should never forgo her treats, and until now she hasn't. Usually, the three of them have been the most accurate time-tellers, and from the

end of the last breeding season, almost without exception they were at the back gate loudly demanding their food before any of the Honkers arrived.

Nor has any of the Honkers shown an interest in her. You wouldn't expect them to. Not even Unpop, who has always been a batchelor. They stick to themselves, with only the married couples remainly slightly removed from the flock.

It just doesn't make sense that Roberto, after the loss of Ingrid's young last summer - bastards to him - would have felt such a warm, emotional surge at her tragd tragedy and have taken her backminto his family only to deny both Ingrid and Nature at the most important time. But none of it makes sense. I am certain of only one thing - Ingrid will be childless again this year.

She is perhaps the poorest goose mother I have even seen. But I nonetheless sorrow for her, even if she herseld shows not outward sign of unhappiness.